

# Policy on Assignment of Cellular Telephones

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to address the assignment of cellular telephones as an effective means of conducting the business of the Executive Branch of State government. Its purpose is to establish and communicate the responsibilities of each State Agency and its subdivisions and to define the procedures for the assignment of cellular telephone equipment and services.

## Policy

The Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT), thru the existing moratorium process, is responsible for establishing policy and guidelines for the use of cellular telephone technology by employees of the Executive Branch of state government. This technology is to be made available to employees or departments where the benefits associated therewith justifies the use of this technology. Departments must explore alternatives, such existing wire line phones, pagers and calling cards, to meet their communications needs before ordering Cellular Telephones. If a cellular telephone is deemed appropriate, Departments must consider sharing cellular telephones among as many employees as feasible.

## Types of Assignments of Cellular Telephone Equipment and Services:

- I. **Executive Assignments** – Cellular telephone equipment and service of his/her choice will be individually assigned to the Governor, cabinet and Governor's staff.
- II. **Department Assignments** (Shared Phones) – A Department may be assigned cellular telephone equipment and service to be shared by employees who collectively serve a specific program that has a continuing need to utilize off-site communications in order to perform their job duties. In determining this need, Departments should consider both the availability of wired service to such employees during the performance of their duties and the suitability of optional, less expensive communications devices.
- III. **Individual Assignment** – When Department assignment will not fulfill the need, employees may be individually assigned cellular telephone equipment and service, if the need to have constant communications is established and the benefits justify the cost.
- IV. **Emergency Assignments** – A Department requiring access to cellular telephone equipment and service on a temporary basis in the event of an emergency may,

through approval of BIT, request assignment of emergency cellular telephone equipment through a pool managed by BIT.

- V. **Replacement of Landline** – A department must conduct a cost and needs analysis to justify the replacement of a landline telephone with cellular technology. This analysis must consider basic service, long distance, and maintenance costs.

Agencies considering the use of cellular technology for a fixed location need to determine what impact a loss of service would have on their operations. Specifically:

- Service is not available in all areas of the state.
- Service is not available in all buildings even in coverage areas.
- Cost in an average office environment may be more expensive when you figure local calls and incoming calls coming off your planned minutes.
- Security issues (eavesdropping, fraudulent billing).
- Limited feature required for most office environments (transfer calls is the big one).
- Battery powered cellular phones must be kept charged.
- Not all Public Safety systems have 911 location capabilities for cellular telephones.